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For Immediate Release

STATE RELEASES ANNUAL CONDITION OF EDUCATION

(DES MOINES, IA) – November 15, 2006 – Iowa Department of Education officials today released the Annual Condition of Education Report, which provides a wide range of data on the state's school population, curriculum and programs, teachers and administrators, and finances to help Iowans better understand our educational system.

"Our goal is that each Condition of Education Report serve as a reliable resource for understanding prekindergarten, elementary, and secondary education in Iowa," said Iowa Department of Education Director Judy Jeffrey. "Accountability is an essential function of public service, and it is my hope that all citizens – especially policymakers, educators and parents – find this report a tool that will help them not only know and evaluate their schools, but also plan and implement changes that ensure schools are meeting the ongoing needs of students and the future of this state."

"The foundation has been laid to close the achievement gap in our communities and to build a fairer and more equitable education system for all Iowa students," said Governor Thomas J. Vilsack. "We are ensuring that students in Iowa receive a world class education and have the opportunities they deserve."

"We know our local districts have high standards and rate very well in many categories," Jeffrey said. "We know also know that education, like the rest of the world and economy, is rapidly changing. The expectations of the past need to be upgraded to better prepare our students for the future. The level of investment also needs to be revised to provide greater support for the teachers and classroom materials necessary to ensure Iowa's children remain the best educated students in the country."

Data in the Condition of Education show Iowa schools rate above national averages in areas such as student test scores, college preparedness, graduation rates, and teacher quality. Jeffrey also noted the challenges that continue for schools, including meeting new and evolving expectations from business and industry, the impact of technology on student learning styles as well as teaching practices, providing more learning opportunities for students, and making more progress toward the reduction of persistent achievement gaps.

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Helping Communities Meet the Learning Needs of All their Children and Adults

CONDITION OF EDUCATION HIGHLIGHTS:

[Section 1 Demographics and Enrollment: Iowa and Its Schools.](#)

Iowa's slow population growth reflects the general midwestern pattern. Contributing factors include low birth rate and an aging population; and while the state has experienced a large increase in immigrant population, we still have a higher rate of migration out of the state when compared to those who come into the state. Personal income also has seen modest growth to \$31,058, which is \$2,000 below the national average. The state continues to have a high percentage of families with two working parents (71 percent compared to the national average of 60 percent).

More than 60 percent of districts saw declining enrollment during the year, although the overall statewide number was down just 220 students. Iowa continues to experience a student population shift from rural to suburban districts as well as a decline in urban districts. Iowa's student population continues to become more ethnically diverse, and more students are participating in English Language Learner (ELL) programs. The population and income trends impact schools by producing lower school enrollment and higher numbers of students who need additional services, such as English language acquisition.

[Section 2 Staff: Who is Teaching our Students?](#)

Of the state's 34,175 full-time teachers during the 2005-06 school year, 100 percent were licensed and certified, 27 percent had advanced degrees, 73 percent were female, 1.8 percent were minority, the average age was 42.3 and the average total salary of teachers was \$41,996. During 2005-06, 1,166 principals served 1,514 buildings, and 322 superintendents served 365 districts. The leadership ranks are gaining more gender diversity, as 36.6 percent of principals are female and 9.3 percent of superintendents are female.

[Section 3 Programs: Learning Opportunities for Students.](#)

At the high school level, districts must offer a minimum of six units of language arts, six units of math, five units of science, five units of social science, and four consecutive units of foreign language. The number of courses offered varies by district and by year, with larger districts typically offering the most courses. During the 2005-06 school year, more students statewide were enrolled in advanced math and science courses, with 24 percent higher-level mathematics, 67 percent enrolled in chemistry, and 26 percent enrolled in physics. Advanced Placement (AP) classes also saw an increase, with more than 6,600 students taking 9,833 AP exams.

Early childhood education also is gaining across the state. All-day kindergarten is now offered by 97.5 percent of districts, while 224 districts offer preschool.

[Section 4 Performance: Student Progress](#)

Graduation rates have a strong positive trend in Iowa, with the state and most districts showing high graduation rates when compared to other districts across the country. During the 2005-06 school year, graduation rates improved overall and for most student groups, with 91 percent of students graduating and an increase of 6.6 percent for Hispanic students since 2002, and an increase of 5.1 percent for African American students.

Course-taking patterns, college prep tests, and reported postsecondary intentions show a majority of Iowa students are preparing for some kind of training or college beyond high school. At least 63 percent of students self-reported that they took "college core" coursework, and the 6,607 AP test-takers scored an average of 3.17 on a four-point scale, compared to the national average of 2.9. In addition, 65 percent of graduating seniors took the ACT college prep exam, with the statewide average composite score of 22.1 ranking third in the nation.

[Section 5 Finance: Investing in our Schools](#). The general fund of each school district has three basic sources of revenue: local, state, and federal. On average, 57.4 percent is provided by the state, 37.4 percent is provided by local property taxes, and 5.2 percent is provided by the federal government. In 2006-07, the state appropriated \$2.25 billion for PK-12 education, 43.2 percent of the state's budget. Total per pupil expenditures were \$7,098 in 2003-04, which ranks Iowa nearly last in the Midwest. The funding trend shows:

	<u>2003-04</u>	<u>2001-02</u>	<u>1985-86</u>
Nation	\$8,156	\$7,536	\$3,481
Wisconsin	9,483	8,608	3,878
Illinois	9,113	7,597	3,301
Minnesota	8,916	8,067	3,766
Kansas	7,982	7,353	3,573
Nebraska	7,324	6,811	3,101
South Dakota	7,300	6,522	2,908
Iowa	7,098	6,819	3,357
Missouri	6,947	6,759	2,794

A large percentage of funding is dedicated directly toward student learning in the classroom. The 2005-06 functional category spending shows:

Instruction, Student and Staff Support	77.0%
Admin. & Central Services	10.2%
Operations & Maintenance	8.7%
Student Transportation	3.8%
Other	0.3%

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